

# New York **BEST CELLARS** DINNER

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## **T.J. Martell Foundation's New York Best Cellars Dinner Welcomes James Beard Award-Winning Chef Alon Shaya**

**Thursday, November 17, 2016**

**New York, NY - October 31, 2016** – The T.J. Martell Foundation for leukemia, cancer and AIDS research will welcome James Beard Award Winning Guest Chef Alon Shaya to New York on Thursday, November 17 at Capitale for the New York Best Cellars Dinner. As a special part of the celebration, the Foundation will also honor Dana Cowin, Chief Creative Officer of Chefs Club International, and Donald Patz, Co-Founder of Patz and Hall.

The New York Best Cellars Dinner is a national concept of the Foundation that brings together a guest chef to create a four-course gourmet meal matched with world class wine from the personal cellars of wine hosts who are seated at each table. Some of the wines that have been poured in the past include 1961 Chateau Petrus, 2001 Penfold's Grange Hermitage, 1974 Heintz Martha's Vineyard, 1985 Domaine Romanee Conti and 1964 Dom Perignon.



“The wine hosts generously donate spectacular wine from their own cellars to share with their table guests,” said Bruce Gearhart, event Co-Chairman. “As outlined above, some of the rarest and most legendary wines have been poured at this dinner. It’s a unique opportunity for guests to taste and learn about renowned wine from around the globe.”

Alon Shaya is Executive Chef and Partner of Domenica, Pizza Domenica and Shaya, a modern Israeli restaurant. Alon discovered his passion for cooking at an early age, spending most of his time in the kitchen with his mother and grandmother in Philadelphia, where he was raised. After training at the Culinary Institute of America, Alon interned at the Rio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. There, he

worked under great chefs such as Jean-Louis Palladin, a pioneer of fine French cooking in America. During this time Alon gained a passion for Italian cooking, which drew him to St. Louis to open Antonio's Ristorante where he began working with his friend and future business partner, Octavio Mantilla.

In 2003, Octavio lured Alon to New Orleans, where he began training under Chef John Besh, serving as the Chef du Cuisine at Besh Steak. In the days after Hurricane Katrina, Alon made the decision move to Italy to continue to explore his passion for Italian cooking. In 2009, Alon, along with the Besh Restaurant Group, formed a partnership to open Domenica, a regional Italian restaurant in the New Orleans Historic Roosevelt Hotel.

Dana Cowin named Domenica one of her top restaurants of 2012 for *Food & Wine*. *Gayot* featured Domenica as one of its hottest restaurants for 2014, and the restaurant has been included in prestigious epicurean publications such as *Bon Appetit*, *Food & Wine*, and *Food52*. Domenica regularly appears as a Top Ten restaurant in the *Times-Picayune's* Dining Guide, and was named as one of “the 20 Best Italian Restaurants in America” by *Time Out*. In 2010, *Esquire Magazine* named Alon one of four Chefs to Watch, and he was also named “Chef of the Year” by *Eater New Orleans*. *New Orleans Magazine* honored him as “Chef of the Year” in 2012. In 2015, Alon was awarded a coveted James Beard Foundation Award, for “Best Chef – South.” That same year, Alon was named one of the “50 people changing the South” by *Southern Living*, as well as one of “50 most influential American Jews in America” by *The Forward*. He was also awarded “Chef of the Year” by *New Orleans Magazine* and named one of the “15 Top Chefs of 2015” by *The Daily Meal*. Alon was also spotlighted in *Tasting Table's* list of “The Chefs Who Ruled the Kitchen in 2015.”

With the growing popularity of Domenica, Alon opened Pizza Domenica, a casual spin-off, in uptown New Orleans in the spring of 2014. After several visits to Israel, Alon was inspired to go back to his roots of cooking and in February of 2015, he opened his namesake Israeli restaurant. Shaya is an innovative restaurant with a warm and welcoming approach to the dining culture inspired by Chef Alon Shaya's Israeli upbringing and New Orleans' local ingredients. *Esquire* named Shaya “The Best New Restaurant in America” in 2015. Additionally, *Bon Appetit* featured Shaya in its list of the “50 Best New Restaurants in the U.S.” and *Southern Living* included the restaurant in its list of “The South's Best Restaurants 2015.” That same year, Shaya earned a place in both *Gear Patrol's* and *Thrillist's* national lists of the “Best New Restaurants in America.” In 2016, Shaya won the James Beard Foundation Award for “Best New Restaurant” and *GQ* named Shaya among their “12 Best New Restaurants of 2016.” Additionally, *Food & Wine* included Shaya in its coveted “2016 Restaurants of the Year” list.

We are delighted to have Chef Shaya's signature dishes at our dinner on November 17th,” said Tom Corson, Co-Chairman of the New York Best Cellars Dinner. “Matching great food and pairing it with spectacular wine to help raise funds for cancer research makes for a perfect evening.”

Tables for the New York Best Cellars Dinner start at \$7,500. Tickets are \$750 and can be ordered on line at [www.NYBestCellarsDinner.org](http://www.NYBestCellarsDinner.org). For more information on the T.J. Martell Foundation please visit [www.tjmartell.org](http://www.tjmartell.org).

#### **ABOUT THE T.J. MARTELL FOUNDATION:**

The T.J. Martell Foundation is the music industry's largest foundation that funds innovative medical research focused on finding cures for leukemia, cancer and AIDS. The Foundation was founded in 1975 by music industry executive Tony Martell and his colleagues in loving memory of his son T.J., who died of leukemia. The Foundation has provided more than \$270 million dollars for research that supports eight flagship hospitals in the United States. This year marks the 41st New York Honors Gala. For more information on the T.J. Martell Foundation go to [www.tjmartell.org](http://www.tjmartell.org).

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